



# Feral Cats — How, Why, What Can I Do?

## As an Individual or Community, What Can I Do? Take Responsibility!

Reduce pet overpopulation because it is humane. "A pair of breeding cats, which can have two or more litters per year, can exponentially produce 420,000 offspring over a seven-year period" (Feral Cat Coalition, San Diego). Help reduce the number of kittens that are unwanted or uncared for by:

### TAKE ACTION

- Remove the "three essentials" (food, water, and shelter). Clear brush, do not keep pet food outside, etc.

### PREVENT UNWANTED LITTERS

- Spay or neuter your cat. It is the law in the City of Long Beach (**LBMC 6.16.085 Unaltered cats prohibited**). This will reduce the number of unwanted litters.

### TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

- Have your pet wear identification. Microchip your pet. This assures that you will be reunited with your lost pet.
- Do not let your cat roam. They will not fall victim to hazards such as vehicles, predators, accidental poisoning, drowning, infectious diseases, parasites, starvation, abuse, and weather.

**Remember, it is your responsibility to make a difference.**

### Learn More About Feral Cats

Contact Humane Society of the United States:

[www.hsus.org](http://www.hsus.org)  
(202) 452-1100



**City of Long Beach  
Animal Care Services Bureau**  
7700 E. Spring Street  
Long Beach, CA 90815

Phone: (562) 570-7387 Fax: (562) 570-3053



## Our Process?

1. **Assessment.** Animal Control Officers investigate reported problems with animals.
2. **Community Education.** In most cases an educated community can formulate a corrective action plan to solve problem.
3. **Community Action.** Working together, community conducts a coordinated effort to solve problem.
4. **Trapping (Last Resort).** Animal Care Services does not trap healthy animals because trapping does not solve the problem if food, water, and shelter is still available.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**What is a Feral Cat?** The California Food and Agricultural Code Section 31752.5(b) defines a feral cat as a **cat** without owner identification of any kind whose usual and consistent temperament is extreme fear and resistance to contact with people. A **feral cat** is totally unsocialized to people.

### What is the difference between stray and feral?

- Stray cats are accustomed to contact. A stray cat is a pet cat who is lost, abandoned, or just roaming the neighborhood (no leash law).
- Feral cats are the offspring of lost or abandoned pet cats or other feral cats who are not spayed or neutered. Also feral cats are not accustomed to contact and are typically too wild to be handled.

**Where do feral cats live?** Feral cats typically live with a group of related cats known as a colony. The colony occupies and defends a specific territory where food (a trash dumpster or a person who feeds them) and shelter (beneath a porch, in an abandoned building) are available.

**How do feral cats survive?** Most don't survive. If they do survive, their lives aren't easy. Contrary to popular belief, domestic animals do not automatically return to their "natural" instincts and cannot fend for themselves!

**Can I Adopt A Feral Cat?** Yes, but feral cat adoption is not for every person or every cat! **BEWARE AND CAUTION.** Feral cats are often frightened of people; It takes time for a feral to learn to trust. It is not wise to adopt a feral if you are looking strictly for a "lap cat" or have small children in your household. Use good judgment and common sense before adopting a feral.

**It is Your Responsibility!**